

Puppy Love by Luddleston

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Summary:

Matt has something to show Shiro, because Shiro deserves a break and being surrounded by small, fluffy animals is the best way to relax.

Puppy Love

Author's Note:

This has been on tumblr for a while but I finally posted here!

Life appears to move on just fine even during an apocalyptic alien invasion; Matt knows this because since landing, he's seen at least three babies that were too small not to have been born post-Galra-invasion. He figures it's a good sign, even though he spends a long time irrationally worried somebody would ask him (a high-ranking member of a rebel alien coalition) to babysit. Thank god people were sane still and nobody requested that of him.

He's not as excited about, you know, human babies and the next generation as he should be, because he's not dragging Shiro through the halls of the residential portion of the Garrison base to introduce him to somebody's kid (partially because then Shiro would want one). He's not elaborating, either, just tugging Shiro along with a quiet repetition of "come on, come on, come on" until Shiro stops resisting and goes with it, racing through the halls with him in a way that's not exactly befitting of the captain of the Atlas, but fuck that, this is important.

"Nobody's here," Shiro points out, hesitating even though Matt's ID opens the door just fine.

"Yeah, I know." Matt plants his feet and tugs a little harder, which does successfully drag Shiro through the front door, because he's not resisting that hard and Matt has the brute strength to pull him around, now, which is exciting. "A friend of mine lives here," he explains, "she asked me to keep an eye on things for a few hours, because somehow this is my responsibility, even though they're my parents' dog's—"

"Puppies," Shiro finishes for him, in a soft, sort of awestruck voice.

Matt figures he's allowed to be a little amazed, considering Keith's the only one of them who's seen a puppy in the past however-long-it's-been. The

timeline's gotten a little scribbly on him.

"Yeah, they're cute, huh?" Matt reaches into the towel-lined cardboard box that's holding four little black and white lumps, who were born just before Matt got back to Earth, and were too young to do much more than wiggle around adorably for a little bit and then fall asleep. They don't look much like Bae Bae, more like their mom, who's sleeping on a pillow that's been repurposed as a dog bed a few feet away from the box. He cups both hands around the smallest one, which is stubbornly trying to dig its way under the blanket instead of just curling up with its siblings for warmth, and plops it in Shiro's lap, where it seems momentarily confused and then satisfied with snuggling up into his uniform jacket.

It's adorable, frankly, especially the way Shiro's eyes light up like he's a ten-year-old who just unwrapped the little furball for Christmas. "They're so small," he says, still hushed, like their tiny puppy ears can't handle his full volume. "How old are they?"

"I dunno," Matt says, "I'm not really a puppy expert." He can vaguely remember when they first got Bae Bae, but it's mostly memories of the dog licking Pidge's face, since she'd been the closest to the ground most of the time.

Shiro has started to pet the puppy's head with two fingers, because the thing's whole body is the size of his hand. He's gentle with it, and when the puppy tries to scoot off his lap, Shiro readjusts it gingerly, trying not to touch it with his prosthetic arm. "You think they'd let me keep one on the Atlas?" he asks, and oh god, of course he's doing the whole "can I please keep it" thing. Matt wonders if he's gonna regret this.

"Too small right now," he says, and resigns himself to giving Shiro the contact information for the people who own the mom dog. Shiro, Matt has always thought, is a dog person who lives the kind of life that would make it much easier for him to just get a cat. But the Atlas could probably use a therapy dog. And Shiro could definitely use a therapy dog.

"I'm the captain, I can decide if we get a dog," Shiro says, not like a decree but like he's just now realizing he can make dog-related decisions for his

crew.

“Are you gonna name him? Her? Them?”

“Don’t put me on the spot like that.” The puppy has fallen asleep on Shiro, with its chin resting on his hand, so he’s powerless to move, stroking his thumb gently over the puppy’s floppy little ear.

“Well, everyone knows once you name it, it’s yours.”

“I’ll name it when I can keep it,” Shiro determined, and it’s ‘when’ not ‘if.’

“Well, you better start thinking,” Matt says, and then, because he has a brilliant idea, he elbows Shiro in the side. “Hey. Lay down. I’m gonna put all four of them on you at once.”